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NSC BRIEFING

24 September 1953

THE OUTLOOK FOR COMPLETING RATIFICATION
OF THE EDC TREATY

Summary of the Present Situation

A. France

1. The French situation, which looks markedly better than four weeks ago, continues to be the crux of the whole problem.

I will return to this in a moment.

B. West Germany

1. Both houses of parliament ratified last spring.
2. Constitutional Court now deliberating the legality of both Bonn and Paris treaties, but generally expected to follow the 6 September election returns.
3. If not, Adenauer can probably muster

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State Department review completed.

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a two-thirds majority for the necessary modifications of the constitution.

C. Netherlands

1. Lower house ratified by two-thirds majority in July.
2. Upper house approval is generally expected, possibly by the end of the year.

D. Belgium

1. Final approval not considered in doubt and government believes this may be attained in 1953.

E. Luxembourg

1. Approval expected to follow Belgium's.

F. Italy

1. The one country where prospects now look actually worse than they did last spring, when De Gasperi promised to push the treaty through parliament this year.

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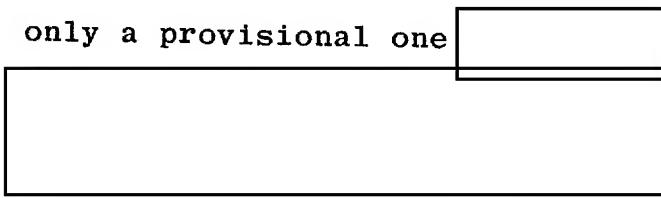
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2. Several reasons for this decline in ratification prospects:

a. De Gasperi's poor showing in the June elections was widely attributed to his previous close cooperation on US-sponsored policies.

b. The present Pella government is only a provisional one

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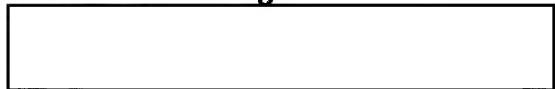


c. Trieste has become an even more burning issue with Italian public.

(1) Pella told Ambassador Luce on 3 September that a favorable solution was now a precondition for Italian EDC ratification.

d. Hence a date for EDC debate is

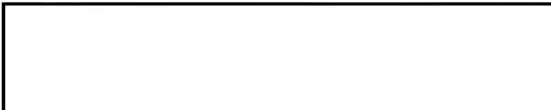
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not even being discussed at
this time.

- e. But Italy seems to recognize that European integration is to its long-term interest, economically and defense-wise; it is already a member of the Coal-Steel Community.
- f. Hence, Italy not likely to be a hold out once the other participating countries have all ratified.



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The More Critical Problem in France

A. German elections of 6 September a turning point

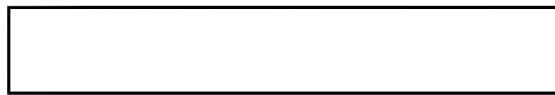
1. The shift of French government policy in the second half of September was striking.

B. Before German elections, a black picture

1. The Laniel government was committed to no schedule on EDC ratification.
2. The enemies of EDC were organizing an aggressive opposition.
3. France and Germany were deadlocked on the Saar.

C. Change of atmosphere after 6 September

1. On 9 September, Under Secretary of State Maurice Schumann told Ambassador Dillon with enthusiasm--
The elections had provided "a much needed shock for French public opinion," and,



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On 15 September Bidault assured Dillon that, given a Saar settlement-- He was now convinced France would ratify EDC before the end of the year.

3. Dillon commented:

"This position by Bidault is a dramatic change of front. While he has always maintained his support for EDC, he has never before given a date for ratification."

4. On 17 September Dillon noted that

there was now

"keen competition between Laniel and Bidault as to who can do most to get EDC through."

5. On 26 September, Laniel announced

publicly that

He would ask Parliament to ratify EDC as soon as outstanding differences with Germany were settled.

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D. French ratification now seems to depend on:

1. An understanding on the Saar
2. Satisfying the Socialist Party on:
 - a. A European Political Community with real supranational powers
 - b. Close British association with EDC
3. Avoidance of a new cabinet crisis
4. Avoidance of upsetting developments abroad

E. To take up these points one by one--

1. Prospects for Saar settlement

a. Negotiations, which last spring reached agreement on the principle of "Europeanizing" the territory, are to be resumed in mid-October.

b. Adenauer's electoral victory gives him greater leeway to make

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concessions on the chief remaining stumbling block--France's economic position in the Saar.

(1) He is already publicly on record as realizing France cannot give this up entirely.

2. Problem of insuring Socialist support

a. French government needs over 300 National Assembly votes to put EDC across there, but can count on only about 250 from the parties in the coalition.

(1) Several ex-Gaullist cabinet members threatened in mid-September to resign on the European integration issue.

b. Government therefore looks to the Socialist party as the most

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promising source of the needed
additional votes

(1) Believes that under
proper conditions it can
swing about 80 of 104 de-
puties of this party.

3. Avoidance of cabinet crisis

- a. Overthrow of the Laniel govern-
ment would probably mean a pro-
longed and serious crisis.
- b. There are various indications
that Laniel will stay in power
at least till mid-December, but
he faces real threats particu-
larly from the budget and labor
problems.

4. Avoidance of upsetting developments

abroad

- a. EDC ratification could also be
affected by developments abroad
such as:

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(1) The fate of the Navarre
plan in Indochina

(2) Further Soviet initia-
tives toward an East-
West detente

b. Even if all goes well in the
National Assembly, the upper
house of Parliament could hold
up ratification as long as two

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